



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 2
290 BROADWAY
NEW YORK, NY 10007-1866

JUL 25 2014

Commissioner Darryl Smalls
U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Public Works
8244 Sub Base, St. Thomas
Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas, Virgin Islands 00802-5805

Dear Commissioner Smalls:

This is in response to your request for a Categorical Exclusion (CATEX) from substantive environmental review requirements, pursuant to 40 CFR Part 6, for your proposed project involving upgrades to the George Simmons Wastewater Treatment Plant on St. John, U.S. Virgin Islands. The Department of Public Works is seeking funds through a federal construction grant.

The George Simmons Wastewater Treatment Plant was constructed twenty five years ago to service the George Simmons Terrace Housing Community at 16 Remainder Estate Adrian on St. John. This aging and severely deteriorated 1,000 gallon per day wastewater treatment plant serves 20 single family affordable homes centrally located on the island. A federal court order under the Clean Water Act requires the Virgin Islands Waste Management Authority to immediately improve the structural integrity and functionality of this wastewater treatment plant.

Upgrades to the plant will involve replacement in-kind of structural and mechanical components which will include, but are not limited to, manual bar screen, aeration tank, clarifier, digester, and chlorine contact chamber. Electrical and instrumentation equipment including the motor control center, auxiliary panels, flow meters, and odor control/drip system will be replaced. Safety systems including gas monitoring and an alarm system will be installed. Two hundred feet of new ¾-inch PVC potable water supply line will be installed from the nearest water pipeline at a connection point within the community to the wastewater treatment plant. Trenching will be required to install the potable water supply line and can be accomplished by using machinery to cut a narrow path along an existing concrete roadway. The roadway will be restored to its original condition after the water line is installed. General electrical system lighting, receptacles, and appurtenances will also be rehabilitated or replaced for improved plant safety. Fencing will be repaired and landscaping work will be completed to enhance its aesthetics and surroundings. These proposed upgrades will improve plant maintenance and operations, and protect human health and the environment.

The project meets the CATEX eligibility criteria found in 6.204(a)(1)(ii). This category includes "actions relating to existing infrastructure systems (such as sewer systems, drinking water supply systems, and stormwater systems, including combined sewer overflow systems) that involve minor upgrading, or minor expansion of system capacity or rehabilitation (including functional replacement) of the existing system and system components (such as the sewer collection network and treatment system; the system to collect, treat, store and distribute drinking water; and stormwater systems, including combined sewer overflow systems) or construction of new minor ancillary facilities adjacent to or on the same property as existing facilities."

This project does not involve a new or relocated discharge to surface or ground water, an increase in the volume or loading of pollutants to receiving water, or capacity to serve a population 30 percent greater than the existing population. Further, it is not contrary to any state or regional growth plan or strategy; and it is not primarily for the purpose of future development.

Additionally, the available information you provided concerning the proposed action indicates that none of the specific criteria for not granting a CATEX, found in 40 CFR 6.204(b)(1) through (b)(10), are present.

Based on our review, EPA approves the request for the CATEX. Please be reminded that EPA may revoke this CATEX if any of the following conditions occur:


- changes in the proposed action render it ineligible for exclusion,
- new evidence indicates that serious local or environmental issues exist, or
- federal, state, or local laws would be violated.

Furthermore, EPA strongly encourages project sponsors to incorporate green practices into all phases of a project, including planning, design, and construction. Such practices can promote sustainable infrastructure, support development of a "green" workforce, and reduce long-term operation and maintenance costs. In previous correspondence with you, we have enclosed a copy of a fact sheet for your information that identifies a variety of recommendations that should be given consideration in projects. EPA hopes to see green practices incorporated as a standard part of projects in the U.S. Virgin Islands.

This CATEX will be available on the EPA website at <http://www.epa.gov/region02/spmm/r2nepa.htm>.

Should you have any questions regarding this decision, please address them to Grace Musumeci, Chief, Environmental Review Section, at the above address.

Sincerely,



Judith A. Enck
Regional Administrator

cc: May Adams Cornwall, P.E., Executive Director, WMA
Laurie Williams, Director of Engineering, WMA
James Grum, P.E., Chief Engineer, WMA
Tawana Albany Nicholas, Engineer, WMA
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